Grand Council of Cryptic Masons
State of New York

Most Illustrious Carl J. Klossner
Grand Master
118 Quarry Ave.
Old Forge, NY 13420-0875
GrandMaster@nycryptic.org

GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

Preparation:

Looking out into this Assembly is both exciting and scary. For the first time looking into your faces with the anticipation of what is to come, is very powerful. Emotions should run high with the thoughts of what is to come from your point of view. From my point of view, I must be attentive to what needs to be done. I feel very fortunate to be able to follow the several past Most Illustrious Grand Masters, in the way they led and how they handled the many concerns we will face together this year. Their support is crucial to the success of our upcoming year!

For those who remember me from my official visits to your councils, I mentioned I was told I was a brave person! When I asked why the response was, "many do not live long enough to make it"! Well, I made it! Part two is to live long enough to finish my term. Now let's talk about the dash between the beginning and the end of this year's term. I need to do everything I can to help build a stronger body of councils throughout the state.

The Commencement:

To get started I felt I needed to remember my basic training as an educator. No, I'm not going to keep anyone after a council meeting! I do believe, if you don't teach your expectations, you can't expect to receive the outcomes you are looking for. With that in mind, I met with our District Deputy Grand Masters and our Assistant Grand Lecturers, including our Grand Lecturer, our Grand Principal Conductor of the Works, and our Captain of the Guard to discuss the duties of our district leadership teams. Our Grand Lecturer and I discussed deadlines, needs and our Constitutions.

This past year our Grand Line discussed Town Hall meetings and who should perform them. There were several opinions offered on who it would be. The suggestions ranged from the Deputy Grand Master to the District Deputies. The final decision was the Grand Line Officers assigned to your districts would cover this duty. Now we need to tell you why we are adding this topic to their official visits. I have heard in my travels, the Grand Line doesn't know what difficulties our individual councils are experiencing. That is exactly why you will be asked to tell us what problems you see in your councils, your districts, and the state. If you like something we do, tell us; if you don't, tell us that too. When the Grand Lodge Officer visits, he will ask you for your thoughts on our fraternity! That visit may be separate from the district officers, but hopefully it will be with them. Our overall goal is to make our Cryptic Community stronger!

Moving Forward:

Over the last several years we have seen the cost of everything we do increase. Travel, supplies and lodging. We mentioned at one of our grand assemblies we wanted to look into combining grand sessions. The immediate response we heard after that meeting was, "please, make that happen, it is getting too expensive to do this type of thing four times a year". As a result of these comments, we are now beginning to combine activities with our Grand Commandery. The Very Eminent Deputy Grand Commander and I have discussed how we can make this happen. We have met and formulated plans to start combining our Grand Assembly and Grand Conclave over the next year. Of course, the question you should be asking is what, does that mean? The first step we have taken is to bring our Grand Commandery and Grand Council together to combine our receptions into one event. We have worked to contain the prices of our meals, remembering the success of our activities isn't determined by the amount of money spent, but by the work and energy we offer to our members. Step two will take place in 2027. September 2027 will see Grand Council Assembly and Grand Commandery Conclave taking place the same weekend. Both individual bodies will hold separate events through the weekend, but dinners and lunches will be together. These steps are being taken to provide a viable method to attend and support your grand bodies without breaking the bank.

Masonic Basic Tenets:

We learned when we first approached the altar so many years ago, we should help, aid and assist our brothers, companions, and Sir Knights. As we look around our state we see many of our chapters, councils, and commanderies struggling to open due to lack of attendance, among other reasons. What can we do to help? There are many answers to this question.

Let me digress for a minute at this point! When I first became active in our district council, I was proud of what we did, we knew our ritual, and yes we still made mistakes, but we are human. Then one of our companions asked several of us to travel over to a neighboring council. This could be said about all of our York Rite Bodies. What an eye opener it was for me. It brought reality into my mind. As the years went on, I was fortunate enough to become a member of our Grand Council. I was able to visit many different councils across the state. My point is by me traveling and seeing other councils holding meetings, doing ritual and working together, putting on degrees, helping me change how I look at masonry. Now as I look around the room many of you are asking each other, where is he going with this. I'm sure several of you have already figured it out, but for those that haven't, I'm asking you to get out of your comfort zone and travel to other councils and share! Taking these steps allows you to see other ways to run our meetings and to learn from each other! We are traveling men. I'm asking you to be traveling Cryptic Men! This will help you realize that from the eastern side of our great state to the western side; from the northern border to the southern border we are one large Cryptic Family! I enjoy traveling and seeing my companions, no matter where you are located. Now I know in every family there are times when we don't see things the same way, but like all families, we learn to deal with each other and make our daily activities a family event! For this reason, I have made my theme for this year **Cryptic Family**, **with a symbol of two hands shaking!** This is the basics of my lapel pin. I will mention what everyone thinks at the start of each year, oh boy, I need another lapel pin. Originally, I had thought, "do we really need another lapel pin", and after hearing several people explain to me ahy I really needed to have one I settled on what I just described.

Now for the basics, I am asking for a $5 donation for each pin. Your DDs and the Grand Line Officers all have them and I have more when needed. All proceeds from the donations will be given to two separate charities. For those of you who have heard me speak on our Official Visits, my mother passed from Parkinsons and complications from Parkinson's. Half of money collected will be given to our Parkinsons Charity.

I also was fortunate enough to have spent approximately 40 years working in education. I worked with junior high students to begin with and as the years progressed, I worked with all students K – 12. At some point I moved into administration, but I still had direct contact with the students in the schools I was in. I am currently a member of one of three Dyslexia Centers in New York State. Having said this, the other half of the money raised from the lapel pins donations will be donated to the Central New York Dyslexia Center.

The End of the Journey:

Well, I have told you about the beginning of this journey, getting started, what I want us to do and how we are trying to bring things together. And what my theme is for the year and our much-needed Lapel Pins. But some of you are thinking, what is he going to do when things go wrong? The answer to that question is quite simple! We have a constitution for a reason. This document was written to be a guide for our Councils. We have many Most Illustrious Companions who provide a brain trust for advice, we have a Jurisprudence Companion who makes sure we make legal decisions and actions. Our Grand Council meets monthly to discuss what is going on from the local levels to the State Level. For example, there have been several discussions about possibly bringing new councils into our districts. All decisions related to this topic will be driven by the steps outlined by our Constitutions and our other advisory groups. So, yes there is a plan!

In closing, I want to thank you for your support and I hope when September 2027 comes around and I am replaced by our Deputy Grand Master, you will look back on this year and feel it has been a good year and we had growth across our state! God bless our military, our first responders and each and every one of us as we enter into this new year, and hopefully you will fell my "dash" was what was needed for our Grand Council!

Zealously,

M.: I.: Carl J. Klossner

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Grand Master
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